FUNraising in Fall

State nonprofits will host key fundraising events this fall, such as "Life's a Drag, Let's Do Brunch."

ALSO INSIDE:
- New Leadership at Jim Collins Foundation
- FUERZAFest returns to Hartford
- A Kiki with Carrie Ashton
- LGBTQ+ To-Dos Around the State

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A Kiki with Carrie Ashton
The singer has been building an audience for nearly 20 years. Kiki Lucia sits down with her prior to her performance at PRIDE New Haven’s Tea Dance. Page 8

FUERZAFest returns
FUERZAFest returns to bring together Connecticut’s diverse LGBTQ+ Latinx, queer, and trans communities of color, artists, and allies. Photos, Page 12; Article, Page 14

Leadership Changes
The Jim Collins Foundation recently saw its founders depart. We talk with the new leadership about what’s ahead. Page 18

Fall FUNdraising
Key fundraisers by LGBTQ+ organizations, like Triangle Community Center’s Visionary party, seen above, are coming up. Page 10

LGBTQ+ Calendar
Aside from the fundraisers, here’s some other activities to attend throughout the state. Page 22

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Welcome to the third issue of Centerline, which also serves as the official Pride Guide for PRIDE New Haven. Centerline’s launch is tied to this event, as previous Pride Guides served as a prototype of sorts. One half of the issue (which you're reading now) is the regular Centerline, while the other half specifically focuses on the PRIDE New Haven events and content.

This Centerline is packed with great information as summer turns to fall. We look at the changing of the guard that recently took place at the Jim Collins Foundation, which was started by Connecticut resident Tony Ferraiolo with friend and colleague Dru Levasseur, but has built a very large presence nationwide and beyond. After a decade, they made the decision to take a step back, and we spoke with the new leadership about their goals and plans.

We highlight the upcoming FUERZAfest in Hartford, which aims to bring together a number of populations within our LatinX LGBTQ+ community for a free, one-day festival. It’s their second year in Hartford, and they'll be building on last year's good work.

Speaking of good work, there’s a number of key nonprofits hosting major fundraisers this fall, from the Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective "One Big Event" to the Triangle Community Center’s "Visionary Gala."

We offer an overview of the fall calendar. A new column, "A Kiki With..." launches this issue, which will feature interviews with a diverse array of community members. This issue we highlight Carrie Ashton, a musician who's performed for nearly two decades, and has been steadily building a name. She'll be playing at PRIDE New Haven's Tea Dance.

We've got photos from the recent New London Pride organized by the OutCT team in New London. Their pride effectively kicks off the fall portion of pride season in Connecticut, which concludes with PRIDE New Haven.

The question often comes up, "Why pride in August/September? Why not June?"

There's a number of reasons, from avoiding direct competition with larger pride events in June, to offering them during a window when college students are back and can partake in them. While Pride Month is designated in June, across the country pride events are taking place in a growing portion of the calendar. They now take place from March to October. We've reached a point where celebrating our community, remembering our history, and looking forward, can (and does) happen anytime.

Please send us your feedback about this issue, good or bad - we'd love to hear from you! You can email us at nhglcc@gmail.com. Thanks for reading!
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New London Pride

The picturesque Ocean Beach Park is transformed each year for the New London Pride Festival, produced by OutCT. Entertainment at the festival included Sister Funk, the Hartford and Connecticut gay mens choruses, and Dani Arranka.

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A Kiki with Carrie Ashton

by Kiki Lucia

“A Kiki with...” is a new column specially created for Centerline Magazine by New Haven-based LGBTQ+ activist and drag performance artist Kiki Lucia. The goal of “A Kiki with...” is to find interesting people in our community who are representing us on local, national, and international stages and give them an opportunity to talk about what they are doing.

For our first kiki, I decided to interview nationally recognized lesbian musician Carrie Ashton.

For almost 20 years, Carrie has been performing on stage. She performs solo acoustic, and periodically with her band. She regularly travels throughout New England and the East Coast. Car-

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Carrie Ashton will be performing at PRIDE New Haven's Tea Dance this year.

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Carrie Ashton will be performing at PRIDE New Haven's Tea Dance this year.
KIKI: What genre of music would you say your music fits into?
CARRIE: Lately I’ve been leaning more towards a Country/Americana vibe with my writing, so I guess I’d put it there, though I feel like it fits into the Acoustic Rock category as well.

What is your favourite type of venues to perform?
That’s a tough one because I don’t think it’s necessarily the venue itself but the vibe in the room. I’ve played very large stages with just an ok vibe, but I’ve played smaller and more intimate venues where the energy was absolutely amazing.

What are some of your inspirations for your music?
I tend to write about things that are true to life for me. Relationships, friendships etc. Even if I’m writing about something that’s not currently going on in my life.

Tell me about your new album “Invincible.”
“Invincible” is about going through deep heartbreak, changes, growing and coming out better on the other side of it all. I chose the heart on the cover because ultimately, it’s about love, but it’s cracked and sewn together because I think all of us have scars, but we somehow manage to keep it together and move forward.

How does being a queer artist effect your career? Do you find that your queerness has helped or hurt you?
I’m not sure it has helped or hurt. I’ve been out for a very long time, but I don’t view myself as a queer artist, I just see myself as an artist who also happens to be a lesbian. I think I just view myself as someone who writes songs that hopefully everyone can relate to, some more than others, and enjoy.

I have never shied away from writing “she” or “her” in my lyrics, and (fortunately) I have never run into an issue with any of the venues I play. I just try to let the music and my performance speak for itself.

What’s the funniest thing that has ever happened to you at a gig or an event you played at?
Ever? Oh man, that’s a lot to remember! Haha, let me think... one night a while back I played a lesbian club in NYC. I think it was called The Cubby Hole or something.

Anyway, this drunk woman kept yelling “we love you Carrie Ashley!” and no matter how many times I tried to tell her it was Ashton she just kept yelling “YEAH! CAR-RIE ASHLEY! WOOO!”

A couple of my friends who were there still jokingly call me “Carrie Ashley.”

Where can our readers catch you play?
I play literally all over the place! The best way to find me is to check out my schedule on my website- www.carrieashtonmusic.com

A “kiki” is a term which grew out of Black and Latinx LGBTQ+ social culture - loosely defined as a gathering of friends for the purpose of gossiping and chit-chat.
Key LGBTQ+ Fundraisers for Fall

by Patrick J Dunn

Check-out these upcoming FUNdrasiers where you can support the community while attending a fun event! In each issue of Centerline, we will continue to let you know about fun events around the state that you can attend and give back to Connecticut’s LGBTQ+ community.

Sept. 23: Life’s A Drag, Let’s Do Brunch

Imperial Sovereign Court of All Connecticut

The de Luxe Sisters host their annual drag brunch benefit at the Pond House Café in West Hartford. This fun Sunday afternoon event begins at noon, with delicious food, fabulous performances, and a brunch fashion show. This year’s brunch will support the CT Breast Health Initiative. $50 includes brunch, cash bar. More info at facebook.com/ctimperialcourt.

This year's "Life's a Drag, Let's Do Brunch" benefits the CT Breast Health Initiative.

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Sept. 29: Visionary Gala: Visions of Tomorrow
Triangle Community Center
The Triangle Community Center of Norwalk hosts its 12th Annual Visionary Gala at The Loading Dock in Stamford. This Saturday evening black tie (optional) affair includes awards to leaders and volunteers within the LGBTQ+ community and raises nearly 20% of TCC’s annual operating budget! $150 includes 3-course sit down dinner. More info at ctpridecenter.org.

Oct. 13: Blues, Barbeque, Bourbon & Beer
AIDS Project New Haven
This fun annual tradition includes a bourbon tasting, delicious passed hors d’oeuvres, and musical performances. The event also features a robust silent and live auction and raises vital funds for AIDS Project New Haven’s programming. This year’s event will be held at the Common Ground High School in New Haven. $50 includes hors d’oeuvres and bourbon tasting. More info at apnh.org.

Oct. 20: One Big Event
Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective
One of the largest fundraising events in Connecticut annual, One Big Event takes place at the Hartford Convention Center in Hartford. This is not just another party, as the HGLHC is turning 35 this year! The event always includes awesome entertainment, dancing, and more! $150 include dinner. More info at hglhc.org.

The Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective presents their biggest annual fundraiser, "One Big Event," on October 20.

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An immigrant himself, and admitted in the state of Missouri, David obtained his law degree at the prestigious University of London, in the United Kingdom in 2003, before proceeding to achieve a Master of Laws degree (LLM) in legal practice and human rights law. He is admitted in Missouri State and practices solely immigration law. As immigration law is federal law, David represents clients from all states in the United States (including Connecticut), and clients from abroad. David is a member of the National LGBT Bar Association, American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA), Missouri State Bar, Connecticut State Bar (not admitted), and is a solicitor of the Supreme Court of England & Wales. The firm represents clients on the following areas of Immigration Law:

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Last year, FUERZAfest came to Hartford for the first time, an effort to bring together Connecticut’s diverse LGBTQ+ Latinx, queer, and trans communities of color, artists, and allies. The free, one-day festival returns on October 11. Enjoy photos from last year's festival on this page, and turn to page 14 for details on this year's event.

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FUERZAfest: Celebrating LatinX LGBTQ+ Communities

by Jose Feliciano

Coming in for its second iteration, FUERZAfest returns to Hartford to bring together Connecticut’s diverse LG-BTQ+ Latinx, queer, and trans communities of color, artists, and allies. The free, one-day festival will include discussion panels, Latin American film screenings, and a spoken word performance on Thursday, October 11, 2018.

Highlighting the theme, “Art on the Frontline,” FUERZAfest Connecticut will include discussions underscoring the impact of the arts as a catalyst for action and a safeguard against homophobia, transphobia, racism, and xenophobia. The cultural festival will also create an inclusive space to explore intersectional issues such as undocumented immigrants, family rejection, religious conservatism, and LGBTQ+ youth.

The initiative, organized by the Hispanic Federation, a nationwide leader in advocating for the LGBTQ+ rights and civil rights of the Hispanic community for almost three decades, was created in response to the Pulse Nightclub tragedy in 2016. In 2017, the festival came to Connecticut for the first time where 15% of LGBTQ+ individuals identify as Hispanic. The Hartford metropolitan area ranks 10th in the nation for percentage of its adult population that identifies as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender, according to a recent 2015 survey by the Gallup Organization.

If you are looking for an inclusive space to have deep conversations about life at the intersections and the impact of art in telling stories of community, FUERZAfest Connecticut will have it. A full schedule of events will be listed on the festival website.

About Hispanic Federation

The mission of the Hispanic Federation is to empower and advance the Hispanic community. The Hispanic Federation provides grants and services to a broad network of Latino non-profit agencies serving the most vulnerable members of the Hispanic community and advocates nationally with respect to the vital issues of education, health, immigration, economic empowerment, civic engagement and the environment.

For more information, visit www.hispanicfederation.org.

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More information at:
newhavenpridecenter.org/centerline-magazine/

Pitch a Story
Help us build our content. Suggest a story to be included in Centerline Magazine – the Center excepts both story referrals and content trade on a variety of LGBTQ+ topics and activities around Connecticut!

Centerline Magazine is also occasionally looking for writers to help to contribute to the diversity of voices and perspectives being presented.

Email our Editor at:
nhglcc@gmail.com

Centerline Magazine is published six times a year on odd months (Jan, Mar, May, July, Sept and Nov) by the New Haven Pride Center and is released both digitally as well in print. All content is due by the 15th of the month before issue publication.

Want to be on our distribution list? Email our Editor at
nhglcc@gmail.com.
LGBTQ History Tour of NYC

By Vincent Contrucci
Treasurer, GLSEN CT

Walking the streets of New York City, we walk through a rich history, much of which lies in plain view. GLSEN Connecticut hopes to expose some of the hidden queer history of the city through an engaging walking tour that is also a fundraiser for the chapter.

GLSEN (pronounced “glis-ten”) is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring safe and equitable educational environments for all community members through research, education, inclusive policies.

As a Board Member of GLSEN Connecticut, I developed this walking tour because of a discussion with a queer-identified student who was unfamiliar with the Stonewall Riots or why Pride occurred in June.

The walking tour is centered in and around Greenwich Village in NYC connecting participants to nearly twenty events, organizations, and individuals that propelled the LGBTQ Civil Rights Movement forward.

Beginning with an exploration of contemporary activism, the tour will begin with a visit to the Leslie-Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art in SoHo and conclude at the Church in the Village just around the corner from the NYC LGBTQ Center.

During the walking tour, participants will explore topics related to liberated queer activists, protest tactics and their evolution, and the sometimes-fractured nature of progression as internal differences radically transformed organizations.

Join GLSEN Connecticut in October for this illuminating walking tour to learn what was left out of our history books and explore the fascinating history of NYC’s involvement in our civil rights movement.

You’ll also be helping us raise some needed funds for GLSEN Connecticut to provide more safe space kits to schools, trainings for teachers, and financial support for Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs).

When & Where

To learn more and register for the tour, please e-mail connecticut@chapsters.glsen.org. Registration is available on their website, http://www.glsen.org/connecticut

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INTERVIEW

Jim Collins Foundation Leadership Looks Ahead

by Joshua O’Connell

For more than a decade, the Jim Collins Foundation has been providing grants to transgender individuals so they can receive gender-affirming surgeries. Founded by Connecticut resident Tony Ferraiolo with friend and colleague Dru Levasseur, the organization has already given out 20 grants since its founding. Recently, Ferraiolo and Levasseur stepped down from the organization, handing the reins to new leadership.

We interviewed new board President Jody Ran dall and Vice President Ryan Sallans about the future of the organization, why they got involved, and how community members can apply for grants.

JOSH: What led you to be a part of the Jim Collins Foundation?

JODY: Gender affirming surgeries are a real need for some transgender people to live as whole people. I had support structures in place or available to me for my social and medication transitions. Relative to the surgical needs of my journey, my then-spouse and I were able to move forward financial with the steps that I needed to take place. Later, through an employer-provided insurance plan, I was able to complete my process. It was not easy. It was harder than it should be. Being part of the Jim Collins Foundation is one way I could work to make the process a bit easier for others.

RYAN: Giving back to the transgender community through volunteer efforts is something that is of high importance to me. When I saw

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that the Jim Collins Foundation was seeking new board members, I felt a need to be part of the Foundation, in order to provide further support to individuals who identify as transgender.

You served on the board prior to taking on these new leadership roles. What encouraged you to take that next step?

JODY: I knew the Foundation was approaching a major milestone in its life when I joined the Board. The Foundation had seen success for ten years, largely due to the lead-

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The Art of Protest
Dec 3, 2018 - Jan 31, 2019
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Opening Reception on Dec 3rd at 6:00p.

2019-20 Exhibition Series Call for Artists
The New Haven Pride Center invites LGBTQ+ artists, curators, nonprofit organizations, and students to exhibit their work (primarily 2D) at the Center in our Great Room Gallery. To apply to be apart of the 2019-20 Exhibition Series, please download the Guidelines and Proposal Form from the Center’s website and submit by December 1, 2018.

More information at newhavenpridecenter.org
ership of our co-founders. It was, however, time for the organization to pivot to its next phase of development and service to our community. I am someone with an abundance of energy to look at things in pragmatic, often direct ways was needed to the job done.

RYAN: Having worked with Jody in a different capacity, when Dru and Tony informed me that she would be stepping into the President’s role, I couldn’t turn down the ask to be VP. Jody is a true visionary leader. The President and Vice President roles are extremely demanding for a volunteer-run organization, but we both hope that through working together and with our other board members that we can see continue to JCF grow and reach more people.

What has most impressed you about the organization’s successes to date?

JODY: We persist in times when transgender people need our support the most. RYAN: The fact that our organization even exists and has seen growth over the past ten years is what impresses me the most. Dru and Tony were told that an organization like JCF could not work, but they proved that it can, and we hope to see it expand in the coming years.
What areas of the organization do you think bring the most opportunity?

JODY: Our core mission is to support trans health. We do that by providing financial assistance to individuals who need gender affirming surgeries as part of their transition. Today, more transgender people are living openly in our towns, states, and country. While we continue to advocate for more inclusive healthcare options and streamlined processes to access high-quality care, organizations like the Foundation have tremendous opportunity to help.

What are your goals for the organization as you propel it forward?

JODY: Our main goals for the foreseeable future are to focus like a laser on expanding our capacity to award financial support for gender affirming surgeries, raising our visibility within the community as a valued resource in this work, and continuing to honor the legacy and relationship of authentic allies to transgender people, like that of our namesake Jim Collins and co-founder Tony Ferraiolo.

How does the grant process work?

JODY: The Foundation has two grant funds currently. They are our Founders Grant, previously termed general grants, which fund 100% of surgical costs. The second is the Krysallis Anne Hembrough Legacy Fund, established through donor-advised covers 50% of surgical costs requiring the recipient to match funds. Our application cycle open mid-May and closes on August 1. A comprehensive process involving our Board of Directors, as well as an independent selection committee of transgender individuals, spends the fall reviewing, scoring, and discussing applications. Decisions are planned for announcement in March.

How can interested parties learn more or request information?

JODY: We encourage those interested in seeking support through our Foundation, as well as those who might wish to donate and/or discuss planned giving options, to visit our website at jimcollinsfoundation.org.
There is always something interesting and fun going on somewhere in Connecticut! We are looking forward to including this column of different LGBTQ+ things to do around Connecticut. Know of an event you think should be featured? Email us with details at nhglcc@gmail.com

**Sept. 20: Waterbury LG-BTQ+ Community Conversation**
An LGBTQ+ community dialogue, hosted by CT Equality in partnership with the Queer Unity Empowerment Support Team, to set CT Equality’s advocacy agenda and discuss issues facing the LGBTQ+ community in Connecticut. Free to attend and hosted at the Mattatuck Museum in Waterbury. More info at facebook.com/ctEQUALITY.

**Sept. 30: Diva’s Presents Coyote Ugly Hoedown**
The Imperial Sovereign Court of All Connecticut and the Imperial Court of Rhode Island host an afternoon of line-dancing, drag performances, and more at Music Lady Café in Plainfield. $10 suggested donation at the door.

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**CAFE 18**

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July 26 at 7:00 PM

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Photo by DmarStudios.com

Kiki Lucia, left, Summer Orlando, center, and Mia E Z'Lay star in "Hocus Pocus Live."
Summer Orlando, Mia E’Z’Lay, and Kiki Lucia take on the roles the Sanderson Sisters in their 30-minute production of the 90s Halloween cult classic *Hocus Pocus*. There will be four opportunities to experience this dragtacular version of the Disney classic. The Connecticut Ren Faire takes place in Lebanon. More info at ctfaire.com

Oct. 19: LGBTQ+ Night at City Climb Gym
Get your sport on with an evening of rock climbing for a cause – the City Climb Gym of New Haven hosts a fun-filled evening on climbing at their amazing facility where a portion of their proceeds will support the New Haven Pride Center Scholarship Fund. Tickets are $10 or $15. More information at facebook.com/newhavenpridecenter